



Pacific Northwest District
YRUCU Visioning for the FUTURE
Consultation on Youth Ministry
Summary Report

March 24, 2007
Camp Killoqua, Stanwood, WA
Facilitators: Hannah Stampe and Tera Little

The Consultation on Ministry To and With Youth District Information

Full name of district: Pacific Northwest District

Date of district youth ministry gathering: March 24, 2007

Type of gathering: At a youth conference

Length of gathering: 5 hours, 10:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Total number of participants: 101

Number of youth participants: 77

Number of adult participants: 24

Youth Advisors: 10

District Youth Empowerment Services: 6

Directors of Religious Education: 6

District Staff: 2

District Board Member: 1

Minister: 1

Ministerial Candidate: 1

Coming of Age Mentor: 1

British Columbia YAC: 1

PNWD Youth Rep to the Continental YRUU: 1

Participants from Washington: 65

Participants from Oregon: 29

Participants from Idaho: 6

Participants from British Columbia: 1

Does your district have a Youth-Adult Committee/Youth Steering Committee/the equivalent? Yes. Y.E.S. Youth Empowerment Services.

What positions/roles does it include? Team Leader, Youth Ministry Consultants, Youth Chaplains, Youth Con Consultant, Youth Con Crews (past, present, future)

Is there a youth on your district's Board of Trustees? Yes

Do youth serve on any other district task forces? Yes. Chalice Lighter General Assembly Youth Grant Task Force.

Does your district have a youth coordinator/minister? Starting in July 2006.

What other staff support, if any, exists for youth ministry in the district? Program Specialist.

Does your district regularly offer trainings (Leadership Development, Spirituality Development, Youth Advisor, Anti-Racism Analysis Development, Chaplain, Renaissance Modules)? If yes, which one(s)? How often?

We offer Youth Advisor (Basic & Advanced) in August or September. GoldMine Leadership School is offered in July. The Youth Renaissance Module in July 2006.

This year we cancelled a Spirituality Development Conference and Chaplaincy Training due to low registration. Part of our Consultation Plan is to find a way to offer all the Chrysalis Trainings.

The Consultation on Ministry To and With Youth Identifying Needs and Changes

Infrastructure

Infrastructure Need/Change #1: Encourage youth to go beyond youth group and seek congregational activities, such as being on the Board or helping with services

What will this change accomplish? It will expand the youth voice within the congregation.	
Next Steps 1. Youth Ministry Consultants should get specific list with names and phone numbers of youth in leadership positions. 2. Youth Ministry Consultants should support/suggest more direct congregational leadership info if not very many leaders.	Who 1. Youth Ministry Consultants 2. Youth Ministry Consultants

Infrastructure Need/Change #2: Create a district environmental committee with youth representative. Youth Empowerment Services should also encourage social/environmental activism.

What will this change accomplish? Promote Green Sanctuaries and promote environmental awareness in youth groups.	
Next Steps 1. Create committee with youth rep. 2. Youth rep should communicate with Youth Empowerment Services and Youth Empowerment Services should reach out to congregations.	Who 1. District Executive/Program Consultant

Infrastructure Need/Change #3: Encourage youth and adults to seek resources/definitions of PNWD infrastructure; tell people where these resources are.

What will this change accomplish? Raise awareness of youth representation in the district and raise awareness of liability issues and bylaws.	
Next Steps 1. Publicize where people can find info about PNWD youth representation.	Who 1. Youth Empowerment Services

Communication

Communication Need/Change #1: Increased clusterization

What will this change accomplish?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create stronger/tighter community and open communication channels: advisors/youth/youth in leadership • Peer support 	
Next Steps	Who
1. Create cluster charts – who is in which cluster	1. District Staff
2. Set contact people	2. Congregations/District Staff
3. Use the cluster	3. Cluster

Communication Need/Change #2: Organizing communication

What will this change accomplish?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth awareness of events/opportunities • Successful use of communication pathways • More awareness of opportunities at all levels • Reduce isolation 	
Next Steps	Who
1. Comprehensive list of information channels (internet resources)	1. Scouts
2. Post list of links on PNWD and UUA site	2. Webmaster
3. Create a document and keep up-to-date (new youth advisors' packet)	

Communication Need/Change #3: More communication between congregations and youth

What will this change accomplish?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More security in congregation/youth group • Less confusion in above 	
Next Steps	Who
1. Find congregation to initiate interaction	
2. YAC	
3. Set up multigenerational events and get youth to contribute to newsletter	

Communication Need/Change #4: Condensed monthly information about programs and opportunities for youth (email or website)

What will this change accomplish?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting info to youth faster • Youth more involved • Find out more about the district 	
Next Steps	Who
1. Compile monthly information	1. Youth Coordinator
2. Tell youth advisors information and who they will send it to	2. Youth Coordinator
3. Youth advisors give the info to youth	3. Youth Advisors/Youth

Communication Need/Change #5: Better communication between youth group and congregation/youth advisors, more feedback/response between advisors and youth

What will this change accomplish?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher attendance at youth programs due to greater satisfaction of youth and youth advisors 	
Next Steps	Who
1. An anonymous suggestion box, one for youth to youth advisors and one for youth to youth	1. Youth Advisors/Youth
2. Surveys about youth satisfaction	2. Youth Advisors/Youth

Communication Need/Change #6: More intergenerational activities

What will this change accomplish?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More interaction between youth and adults • Make personal connection that would cause youth to stay in congregation even after they bridge • Adults know more about youth and youth activity 	
Next Steps	Who
1. Monthly intergenerational activities	1. Entire congregation
2. High school youth-adult mentor program through all four years of high school	2. Minister, DRE, Youth, Congregation



Training

Training Need/Change #1: Advertising/more word out; people need to know where to look, who to get, how to spread the word.

What will this change accomplish?	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improved attendance 2. Expanded trainings 3. Expansion of faith 	
Next Steps	Who
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Youth webpage on district website 2. Youth advisors relay information 3. Consultants checking in about training 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Advisors 3. Youth Empowerment Services

Training Needs/Change #2: More accessible trainings

What will this change accomplish?	
Increased attendance.	
Next Steps	Who
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Churches network to produce district training 2. Organized transportation – caravans, etc. 3. Scholarships from home congregations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Churches 2. Planning Committee 3. Training participants

Training Needs/Change #3: Local trainings at churches or cluster trainings

What will this change accomplish?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More local opportunity/accessibility • Increased readiness for district events 	
Next Steps	Who
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pool of active, knowledgeable adults to support 2. Local people trained at district trainings (to come and train) 3. Compilations of knowledgeable, experience (in a library) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DREs



Adult Support

Adult Support Need/Change #1: Youth involvement in youth advisor selection

What will this change accomplish?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More likely to be youth advocates • Better suited to represent youth 	
Next Steps	Who
1. Youth brainstorm list of possible candidates	1. Youth Group
2. Meet with candidates/invite them to a youth group meeting	2. Youth Group
3. Youth bring these opinions to minister/DRE and reach decision	3. Youth, DRE, Minister

Adult Support Need/Change #2: Annual youth/adult mentor program

What will this change accomplish?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving one-on-one support to youth • Helping youth move through transitions/bridging • Giving adults insight into youth programming and life 	
Next Steps	Who
1. Recruiting possible mentors/volunteer sheets	1. Adults in congregation
2. Get-together/plan activities and events	2. Mentors and mentees
3. Execute events and closing	3. Mentors and mentees

Adult Support Need/Change #3: Increase visibility and respect between youth and congregation

What will this change accomplish?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better communication • Better community • More enthusiasm for youth empowerment 	
Next Steps	Who
1. Post section in congregational bulletin about youth happenings and events	1. Youth, Advisors
2. Invite adults from congregation to youth meetings for discussion/conversation	2. Youth, Adults
3. Annual youth service	3. Youth Group



Programming

Programming Need/Change #1: Larger social action projects

What will this change accomplish?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common experience • Bring youth closer together • Give youth groups a purpose 	
<u>Next Steps</u>	<u>Who</u>
1. Find a common cause shared by many youth	1. Youth with adult support
2. Fundraise, publicize	2. Youth with adult support
3. Follow through	3. Youth with adult support

Programming Need/Change #2: Continuing religious education for high school youth

What will this change accomplish?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal faith development • Connection to other Unitarians • Eliminate ignorance 	
<u>Next Steps</u>	<u>Who</u>
1. Reiterate (on a more mature level) the Coming of Age curriculum	1. Youth with adult support
2. Formulate a curriculum	2. Youth with adult support
3. Give something back to the congregation	3. Youth and adults

Programming Need/Change #3: Interact with other youth groups on a more regular basis (UU and otherwise)

What will this change accomplish?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater sense of community • Religious understanding • Help youth leaders understand what is working and not working in youth group 	
<u>Next Steps</u>	<u>Who</u>
1. Communication to see clusters that are already established	1. DREs and youth
2. Plan activities that will be meaningful for advisors and youth	2. DREs and youth
3. Follow through	3. DREs and youth

Programming Need/Change #4: Youth and young adult connections

What will this change accomplish? <ul style="list-style-type: none">Accomplish better relationships between youth and young adults and the UU church/congregation	
Next Steps <ol style="list-style-type: none">Activities with both youth and young adultsMentors for young adultsEncouraging participation in young adult cons	Who

Programming Need/Change #5: Balanced youth programming

What will this change accomplish? <p>More balanced schedule between “fun time” and scheduled activities.</p>	
Next Steps <ol style="list-style-type: none">Find out needs/wants of youth.Time to play as well as scheduled time for needs and wantsRegular planning meetings, keep it open for changes	Who

Programming Need/Change #6: Social justice work

What will this change accomplish? <p>More interaction in the community</p>	
Next Steps <ol style="list-style-type: none">Find interests of group (environment, etc.)Offer district youth and support to change date of SPAG con and encourage participationFind needs of community and apply youth	Who

Programming Need/Change #7: Wide focus and greater visibility in community by dedicating ourselves to causes involving those we want to draw in

What will this change accomplish? <p>It will diversify the UU community</p>	
Next Steps <ol style="list-style-type: none">Choose/encourage causeCommunity events that promote awarenessPanels	Who

Programming Need/Change #8: More in-depth content relating to our religion, other religions, and our personal beliefs

What will this change accomplish?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To feel more at home with our faith (community and personally) • Connect with non-UU faiths • Define our faith – more about UU! 	
Next Steps	Who
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Framework for articulating our beliefs 2. Framework for approaching other religions 3. Worship! 	

Programming Need/Change #9: UU Neighborhoods – unite churches in close proximity of each other

What will this change accomplish?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More power behind programs • Visibility • Personal bonds strengthened with each other • Fun! 	
Next Steps	Who
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Internet communication efficiency/email 2. Minicons/fieldtrips/FUN! 3. Communications leaders 	



Resources

Resources Need/Change #1: Resource coordinator

What will this change accomplish?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Someone who could find what resources are already out there and string them together for easy access to youth • A person who would bring resources together for everyone 	
Next Steps	Who
1. Paid position	1. PNWD
2. Communication for accessing and utilizing this person and their work	2. Resource Coordinator
3. Build a running long-term system	3. Resource Coordinator, people in the district

Resources Need/Change #2: More connection among Unitarian Universalists

What will this change accomplish?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More accomplished ideas between smaller groups before moving to larger groups ○ Step between congregations and cons 	
Next Steps	Who
1. Raise awareness about these smaller groups	
2. Events in area every 1-6 months	
3. Reach out to other youth groups to build connections	

Resources Need/Change #3: A resource for people who are not UUs

What will this change accomplish?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Give people a chance to look at UUs from both outside and inside perspectives ○ Add to understanding, support, and roots outside of youth groups ○ Can distinguish between stereotypes and truth of what we do ○ For all youth 	
Next Steps	Who
1. Compile passages from different youth's perspectives on Unitarian Universalism	1. Congregations
2. Targeted advertising, suggestions, get a better presence	2. Congregations
3. Compile into book or website	3. PNWD

The Consultation on Ministry To and With Youth Youth Ministry

Working Definition

Unitarian Universalist youth ministry is a collaboration between youth and adults to create authentic, anti-racist, anti-oppressive,* multicultural, and intergenerational communities which empower and support:

- The spiritual and religious development of youth
- Mutual love, respect, and trust between and among youth and adults
- Relationship-based ministry and support among youth
- A youth-driven ministry of justice that calls all of us to live out our values in the world.

Like all ministry, ministry with youth is the responsibility of the whole congregation and the whole community.

“The great end in religious instruction...is not to make them see with our eyes, but to look inquiringly and steadily with their own.” – William Ellery Channing

* Anti-racist and anti-oppressive communities are ones in which individuals actively work against individual and institutional racism and oppression while striving for safe, welcoming, and radically inclusive communities. The language of “anti-“ is used to emphasize the prevalence of oppression in the world. It is our calling as people of faith to actively dismantle oppression in Unitarian Universalist communities and the world at-large.

Positives

1. “Youth driven ministry of justice that calls on all to live out our values in the world.” (x4)
2. “Spiritual and religious development of youth” – faith development different for youth age? (x10)
3. Good to have relational aspect highlighted (x3)
4. Responsibility of whole congregation and community (x8)
5. Collaboration (x2)
6. Mutual love
7. Focus on spirituality and joy
8. Authentic (x2)
9. A reflection of language in our principles - consistent
10. Empowerment
11. Sounds more authentic than the youth empowerment definition, this gets to the point
12. Feels positive about it as a ‘working definition,’ more active

Deltas

- Change anti-racist, etc. to a bullet point (x2)
- A-r, a-o, multi - why call this out? what about environmental awareness, justice, compassion? Feels jargon-y.
- “Anti” language (x5) - use ‘welcoming’ ‘inclusive’ ‘accepting’ ‘pro-diversity’ and ‘affirming’

- Intro is great, it should end more like this “to create authentic, non-judgmental, diverse communities which empower and support”
- Add something about hope
- We guide our youth in their relationship to UU
- Walking with youth on their faith journey - connect to UU tradition, theological development, ethical development, moral development (x3)
- We grow in faith by building community
- Make a strong, prominent emphasis on respect/love in our actions
- Opportunities to speak our individual spiritual paths, and explore how they are integrated in the UU whole
- Youth driven ministry - what does that mean?
- Relationship-based ministry – define (x2)
- No mention of our principles (x6)
- We need to provide praxis experience for our youth - learning about our faith, then acting on it
- Give youth respect and responsibility for teaching others
- How? What is the real application?
- What holds everyone together, unifies?
- Doesn't give a real sense of what 'it' is. Spirituality, religion. What are they exactly? How to convey to youth?
- Deliberate
- Understanding difference between pastoral care and worship experience (x2)
- Leadership development
- Awareness of ways in which UU values impact decisions, priorities, behavior
- Safety, healthy boundaries (x4)
- What are the working components? Can they be articulated? - time, energy, space, resources, funding
- Intergenerational community is part of youth ministry, but not ALL it's about
- Intergenerational communities - also need solely youth ministries
- Alternative forms of worship
- What are we about?
- Where is the individual faith?
- Define what, not how. The how is the next piece.
- Faith development
- Why spiritual and religious?
- Remove love - respect and trust covers it, esp. when talking youth to adults (x2)
- Remove between (among covers it)
- The whole point of youth ministry is the spiritual and religious formation of youth. Everything should flow from that, it shouldn't be a subpoint.
- Intro too rambling, get to the point

The Consultation on Ministry To and With Youth Youth Empowerment

Working Definition

A covenantal practice in which youth are recognized and affirmed as colleagues who are essential and vital to our faith community. A practice based on mutual respect and trust between youth and adults, youth and youth, as well as adults and adults. This practice encourages all to grow in a free and responsible way.

This is achieved by:

- A youth-adult partnership in all parts of decision making, including worship, resources and programming.
 - Talking directly, openly and honestly with love and respect in that relationship.
 - Mentoring relationships.
 - Youth coming together to strengthen confidence, build collective voice, and realize a more robust expression of themselves.
 - Recognizing youth ministry history as part of our collective history.
-

Positives:

- “Mentoring relationships” – adults and youth, youth and youth, youth and children
- “Mutual respect and trust”
- Youth-adult partnerships
- Youth ministry history as part of collective history
- Affirmed
- Essential and vital to our faith community
- Talking openly and honestly with respect
- Youth coming together to strengthen confidence, realize more robust expression of self
- Encourages all to grow
- Intentionality
- Emphasis on covenant
- “Colleagues” – like how youth are recognized with rights and responsibilities
- “Free and responsible”
- First paragraph good, a little vague
- Great overall vision covering all angles

Deltas:

- Need an “elevator version” – short and succinct followed by more complexity (x2)
- What is “covenantal practice”? Who is part of that covenant?
- “Our” youth ministry? Whose was it before?
- What are the youth-adult boundaries? Need to be healthy. (x2)
- Highlight covenant aspect

- Where is religion in this definition? More about faith development!
- Emphasis on accountability needed
- Adults are NOT colleagues with youth – need boundaries! Maybe ally instead of colleague? Or spiritual equals? Partners? Co-learners?
- Unpack words like “covenant” “partnership” “process” “robust relationships”
- Mention youth having own needs (x2)
- Something about opportunities to step forward and engage
- Need something about safe space for growth
- Recognition of age and stage, appropriate involvement and educational needs for all
- Current being is more important than history or future of youth presence
- Is this explicitly UU youth empowerment? Maybe make that clear?
- Likes equipping better than empowerment. Empowerment has slid into entitlement or abandonment.
- Does not address power dynamics between ages – vague terms can hide underlying power imbalance
- Need something about youth effort in aiding their own empowerment and stepping out of old roles
- Better define “mentoring relationships”
- Add “learning to lead by recognizing their strengths and leading/mentoring others (e.g. younger UUs, teaching in RE, organizing youth activities)
- Too abstract
- Youth empowerment is situational
- “Freedom to fail”
- Take out “love” from “talking directly, honestly, and openly with love and respect” – you don’t have to love people to work with them
- Not important to recognize youth history as part of collective history – can’t tell people what to think is important
- Religious community instead of “faith” – some don’t define UU as faith
- “A practice based on” too indirect – maybe “empowered youth means...” or “youth empowerment is about...”
- Openly and honestly is redundant
- Lacks real application
- Need youth buy-in to what is worship
- Like covenant but NOT covenantal practice
- Unsure about including adult and adult relationships
- Need a statement about youth and younger children

The Consultation on Ministry To and With Youth Evaluation Summary

67 evaluations were filled out and turned in.

Most Helpful:

- Exchanging ideas and sharing experiences with people from different congregations. Noticing that questions and issues in youth ministry vary greatly based on congregation and congregation size.
- Small group discussion
- Establishing the positives/deltas of youth ministry
- Discussion focused on the future and improvement
- Learning about what the district has to offer

Least Helpful:

- Power Shuffle (Yes/No Activity)
- Too long
- Reflection questions provided were vague, difficult to answer
- Using post-it notes
- Not a very con-like atmosphere
- Too many adults leading conversations
- Too much listening at the beginning

Process/Facilitation:

- Most thought the process was excellent and well-organized.
- Facilitators were fun, great role models, and related well with youth.
- Process was too long, but varying the type of activities helped. A few said it was more interesting than they thought it would be.
- Confusing to people who don't know much about UUism. Needed more explanation/defining.
- Low energy at the end. Should have ended with large group conclusions/reflections.
- Amazing, productive, interesting, good ideas, realistic solutions.



The Consultation on Ministry To and With Youth Process Schedule

Saturday, March 24, 2007

Morning: Youth Empowerment and Youth Ministry (2 hours)

Opening: Song and Toning Exercise

Introductions

Game: All My Friends and Neighbors

Youth Empowerment Definition:

1. Brainstorm definition of youth empowerment
2. Show the task force's working definition of youth empowerment, read it aloud
3. Give each person a big note card, and ask them to write down what works for them, what didn't work for them, in the definition (2 minutes)
4. Break into smaller groups of 2-4 to talk with each other about what they wrote on the cards (10 minutes)
5. Back into larger group, and a five minute popcorn style report back of some of the main ideas

Strengths & Growing Edges of District – brainstorm captured on newsprint (10 minutes)

Youth Ministry Definition:

6. The exact same process as with the youth empowerment definition above

Closing: one word to describe how you're feeling at this time

Afternoon: Needs/Changes for Bigger, Better, Super Power PNWD Youth Ministry Programs (4 hours)

Opening: Reading by Tandi Rogers Koerger

Introduction of Process and Hannah and Tera

Get to know each other: in groups of two, answer the question: How has UU Youth Ministry transformed my life? (5 minutes)

Power Shuffle (15 minutes): The statements used were based on the youth ministry survey responses. This activity was a good way to see how people in the room would have answered the survey.

- I attend worship services at my church

- I attend youth group or religious education regularly
- I go to church with my family
- I filled out a youth survey
- I'm in a congregation that participated in a congregational conversation
- My congregation has an active youth group
- I am involved in activities in my congregation outside of youth group
- I'm involved in social action projects through my church
- I am or have been a leader in my district
- Continuum: how long have you been a UU?
- I feel welcome and respected in my congregation
- I feel supported by the adults in my congregation OR for adults: I feel like I support the youth in my congregation
- My congregation is my spiritual home
- District programming meets my spiritual needs
- I feel like UUism will be my spiritual home 10 years from now.

Reflection Questions – focused on Spiritual Needs and Racial & Sexual Formation

BREAK

Visioning

7. Introduced activity – SIX areas: infrastructure, programming, training, resources, adult support & communication
8. Add ideas with post-it notes (15 minutes)
9. Self-select into focus groups (10 minutes)
10. Groups prioritize and strategize in their area (1 hour)

Return to bigger group. Because of the size of the group, the energy level, and time, there was no report back.

Information on next steps and PNWD's awesome chalice lighters call for GA youth scholarships.

Evaluations

Closing/Thank You